

Docket Number FAA-2004-18596 - I am facilitator for the Southern Colorado Pulmonary Hypertension Support Group in the Pikes Peak Region of Colorado. I represent 30+ breathing disabled persons with pulmonary hypertension.

If you are not aware of this disease, it is a rare, incurable, and life-threatening disease. We are people of any age and ethnic background. Our symptoms include breathlessness, dizziness, and fatigue. The simplest tasks of daily living are difficult. PH is not contagious; you cannot get it from someone else. Most of us are required to use supplemental oxygen to perform daily tasks. Even with our breathing disabilities, we are active, contributing members of society, and enjoy the simple pleasure of travel.

However, we are severely restricted when traveling, and under current regulations, the most efficient means of travel for medical and leisure travel is excessively expensive and inconvenient.

The following article recently appeared in the Gazette, a Colorado Springs newspaper:

MEETING DISABLED TRAVELERS NEEDS COULD HELP BOTTOM LINE (Knight Ridder Newspapers)

Disabled Americans would spend at least \$27 billion a year on travel twice as much as they did in the past year if their travel needs were better met, according to a recently published study.

If the travel industry did more to meet those needs, the increased spending would help offset recent declines in travel spending, the study suggested.

What disabled travelers need are services that make traveling easier, such as meet-and-greet services at airports, preferred seating on planes, hotel rooms close to amenities and hotel employees who go out of their way to accommodate disabled guests, the study said.

The research was done by Harris Interactive on behalf of the Open Doors Organization, a nonprofit corporation that promotes support of people with disabilities.

The Travel Industry Association of America helped prepare the survey, which involved polling 1,037 people with disabilities.

It is time that many of the regulatory issues that make air travel difficult for individuals who rely on supplemental oxygen be considered. We request that a notice of proposed rule making on portable oxygen concentrator systems be issued. It is time that oxygen dependent individuals enjoy all the travel and leisure activities in which other people engage, airline travel included.

It is my understanding that Idaho Senator Mike Crapo applauds the FAA ruling that will allow the AirSep LifeStyle Portable Oxygen Concentrator to be used on airplanes during flight. This means that patients who require oxygen will be allowed to bring their approved oxygen concentrator units on board the airplanes. Please support further investigation of other devices that can be approved for use on airlines.

The current regulatory structure was designed when compressed oxygen was the primary technology for providing supplemental oxygen during flight. Today, technology presents several new options for providing supplemental oxygen during

flight, including: battery-operated portable oxygen concentrators, portable liquid oxygen systems, and improved compressed oxygen canisters. Other technologies are on the horizon.

The Research and Special Projects Administration at the Department of Transportation has reviewed the portable oxygen concentrator and deemed it to fall into the category of a personal electronic device, like laptop computers, portable CD players, and other electronic devices that air travelers are allowed to bring on airplanes and use in flight.

We encourage the FAA to pass this proposed ruling that will allow the AirSep LifeStyle Portable Oxygen Concentrator to be used on airplanes during flight. IT IS THE FIRST STEP&.and means that patients who require oxygen will be allowed to bring their oxygen concentrator units on board airplanes.